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24 August 1951

MEMORANDUM FOR: DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PLANS)

VIA: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR POLICY COORDINATION

SUBJECT: [] (IN 20146) Subproject BGSPEED

REFERENCE: Memorandum for Chief, Eastern Europe, Office of Policy Coordination from Acting Deputy Director (Plans), dated 13 August 1951 (ER-2-0291)

1. With reference to your memorandum of 13 August 1951. I should like to comment as follows on the subject cable [] pending the receipt of further information from the Office of Communications on the ship's radio installation:

a. The use of a vessel for transmitting to Albania was considered particularly desirable because of possible complications in conducting such broadcasts from Greek territory in view of the Greek attitude toward Albania and the fact that the Greeks are not entirely in accord with our Albanian policies and may take exception to or wish to have a voice in controlling the character of the broadcasts. The decision to attempt to broadcast from the high seas was made before it was known that the Greeks would permit the establishment of transmitters within their territory and was based on the assumption that facilities of the type in question would be a valuable OPC asset for both peacetime and wartime use.

b. The radio equipment installed in the vessel as well as the vessel itself were selected after a careful study by such specialists as were available to OPC at the time the project was being planned. Preliminary tests conducted in American waters yielded very favorable results and led to the belief that field performance would be excellent. Consequently, the adverse experience which the field has had to date comes as a great disappointment but also leads to the conclusion that the final comments and recommendations of the Office of Communications must be given considerable weight by this Division in arriving at the final decision as to whether the project should be abandoned in accordance with Athens' recommendations.

c. Even if

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c. Even if the medium-wave element of the transmitting installation is determined to be useless in this particular instance, it is quite possible that the short-wave part of the system could be a valuable asset and would give us the necessary independence if, for example, the Greeks were to assume an attitude which would make broadcasts to Albania from the Greek mainland undesirable or impossible. Furthermore, as a wartime asset, a vessel equipped with short-wave transmitter, the teletype and other electrical equipment which we have aboard, could conceivably be extremely useful in a number of situations.

d. The field's recommendations concerning the sale of the vessel are based primarily on the unsuccessful performance of the medium-wave transmitter and the high cost of maintaining the vessel in running condition because the vessel was designed originally as a pleasure craft. All small boats are expensive to operate. In this instance operating and maintaining costs are within the limits of the original estimates based on yacht practices, and are not considered excessive or out of line. However, before a final decision is made we should make an attempt to secure additional operational cost information to determine whether in this particular case costs are greater than in the case of private and naval vessels of the same general class. There are great advantages in having a vessel of this type for operational use in wartime, and if further study proves that the cost of keeping this particular vessel is not higher than that of others of the same size, it would be desirable to retain it at least in semi-standby condition for wartime use.

2. The following action has been taken or is proposed in regard to the FIEND vessel:

a. The Office of Communications has been requested to submit its final comments and recommendations in regard to the desirability of conducting further tests with the medium-wave equipment, in the light of the information secured by their specialists during the preliminary tests in American waters and subsequent tests in Greek waters.

b. Information will

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b. Information will be secured from as many sources as possible, including the Navy, concerning the cost of operating vessels of the general type and size of the JUANITA in order to determine whether the JUANITA is worse than other boats in this respect.

c. [] will be informed that even if the medium-wave equipment has to be dismantled, the vessel may be retained as an operational asset for use in short-wave broadcasting, as a possible wartime signal center and as a means for moving bodies and equipment by water. In view of this [] will make a study to determine how and where the JUANITA can be kept in semi-standby condition with a skeleton crew and will submit an estimate of the cost of putting it in proper working order and of keeping it in such order.

3. If the Office of Communications can put the ship's transmitting apparatus in such condition as to give the same performance as that obtained during the initial trials, the physical maintenance and operation of the vessel will present no insurmountable problems.

[]
[] Chief, EE 3/1/1

*We have not yet obtained
Greek approval to transport to
Albania from the Greek Territory.*